

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LILONG 00272 261314Z
ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
USMISSION USUN NEWYORK
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

S E C R E T LILONGWE 0272

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK
SUBJ: VIEWS ON HOLDING-ACTION APPROACHES TO FRONT LINE
STATES AND PATRIOTIC FRONT

REF: A) STATE 049593; (B) LILONGWE 1361; (C) LONDON 03053
(D) LUSAKA 0569

1. AS HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY INDICATED (REF B) I THINK
THE U.S. NATIONALINTEREST WOULD BE MUCH BETTER SERVED BY
A ZIMBABWE GOVERNED BY MUZOREWA/SITHOLE AND THEIR SUPPORTERS
THAN ONE GOVERNED BY NKOMO/MUGABE AND THEIRS. IT SEEMS TO
ME A COLDLY REALISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION SUGGESTS
THIS IS THE CHOICE WE NOW FACE TO THE EXTENT WE CAN CONTROL

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EVENTS. THEREFORE TO ME OUR CHIEF CONCERN SHOULD BE HOW
WE MIGHT BEST SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE MUZOREWA/SITHOLE TO
CONTINUE FIRMLY TO USH SMITH TO ONE SIDE AND ESTABLISH
A BLACK GOVERNMENT WHICH IS DEMONSTRABLY IN CONTROL OF THE
COUNTRY AND REPRESENTS THE FREE CHOICE OF THE MAJORITY
OF ZIMBABWIANS. TO BE IN CONTROL DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN
THAT MINORITY RIGHTS CANNOT BE PROTECTED IN SPECIAL WAYS

TO WHICH THE MAJORITY HAS AGREED. NOR DOES IT MEAN THAT THE MAKE UP AND COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE RMED FORCES MUST CHANGE OVER TIME IN ORDER TO ENSURE CONTROL BY THE GOVERNING MAJORITY.

2. UNDOUBTEDLY THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS HAVE HELPED MUZOREWA/SITHOLE AS NOTED IN LUSAKA'S THOUGHTFUL REF D AND CAN CONTINUE TO HELP THEM IN THE MANY DAYS OF NEGOTIATION WHICH LIE AHEAD. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN, NOR SHOULD THEY BE, CONSIDERED IMMUTABLE, AND MORE CHANGES ARE LIKELY TO BE REQUIRED EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY RESULT IN CRITICISMS AND ATTACKS FROM THE FRONT LINE AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. ONE CHANGE WHICH I WOULD URGE IS TO DROP THE THOUGHT EXPRESSED IN REF C THAT THE GUERRILLA COMMANDERS MUST BE TAKEN INTO THE NEW ZIMBABWE ARMED FORCES. TO BRING IN TONGOGARA, HAMMADZARIPI AND NHONGO, TO NAME THE BEST KNOWN, WOULD SOUND THE DEATH KNEEL FOR THE MODERATE LEADERS AND THEY KNOW IT AND WILL NEVER ACCEPT THEM. THE IDEA THAT SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF GUERRILLAS WOULD BE TAKEN INTO THE NEW ARMY INDIVIDUALLY MUZOREWA/SITHOLE SEEM WILLING TO ACCEPT AND I CAN SEE NO COMPELLING REASON TO PRESS THEM FURTHER ON THIS POINT.

3. IF THE SOVIETS AND THEIR CUBAN PROXIES ARE DETERMINED TO TRY TO ASSURE THE DOMINANCE OF MARXIST RADICALISM IN ZIMBABWE THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO DESIST IN THEIR EFFORTS IF NKOMO/MUGABE ARE BROUGHT IN TO SHARE POWER AS A RESULT OF ANGLO-AMERICAN INSISTENCE AND
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PRESSURE. AS I ONCE HEARD GOV. HARRIMAN TELL THE CANADIANS "ONE THING YOU CAN BE SURE OF, MR. MINISTER, IS THAT THE SOVIETS BALANCE THEIR BOOKS EVERY NIGHT". TO THINK THAT NKOMO, ONCE IN, IF HE WISHED, COULD CUT HIS EVER GROWING SOVIET TIES AND DEPENDENCY SEEMS TO ME A VERY DUBIOUS PROPOSITION. IF NKOMO/MUGABE PARTICIPATION WOULD PREVENT CIVIL WAR, WHICH I THINK A MOOT POINT IN ANY EVENT, WOULD WE NECESSARILY WANT PEACE AT THIS COST? IS THERE NOT A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT THE PRESENT ARMED FORCES IN ZIMBABWE, EVEN NOW HEAVILY BLACK, AUGMENTED BY MUZOREWA/SITHOLE SUPPORTERS COULD BLOODY THE SOVIET/CUBAN NOSES IN A MOST SALUTARY WAY; THE CUBANS ARE NOT 10 FEET TALL AS SOME RECENT CABLES HAVE SEEMED TO SUGGEST, BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT IF THEY GET AWAY WITH THEIR AFRICAN GAMBITS AS THEY APPEAR TO BE DOING, WE CAN EXPECT ANOTHER ROUND OF CUBAN ADVENTURES IN OUR OWN HEMISPHERE. THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY IS NOT NEW FOR CASTRO. ALTHOUGH ON A SMALLER SCALE HE BEGAN IT WITHIN WEEKS AFTER HE CAME TO POWER. SURELY WE ARE SEEKING AND OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO FIND THE LEVERAGE OR THREAT TO COOK HIS AFRICAN ARDOR. IF IT HAS NOT ALREADY DONE SO, I SHOULD THINK IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL IF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY MADE AN ESTIMATE OF

HOW REAL THE POSSIBILITY IS OF SIGNIFICANT SOVIET/CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF NKOMO/MUGABE IN VIEW OF THE FORMER'S PRESENT COMMITMENTS IN ANGOLA AND ETHIOPIA.

4. CONSIDERING THE ABOVE, BUT WITH FULL REALIZATION THAT I AM LITERALLY ON THE PERIPHERY AND THAT THERE ARE COMPLICATED, DIFFICULT FACTORS I HAVE NOT TOUCHED UPON, I WOULD RECOMMEND A LEISURELY AND CALM APPROACH TO THE FRONT LINE STATES AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. A SENIOR OFFICIAL (PERHAPS EVEN THE PRESIDENT OR VICE PRES) MIGHT WELL MAKE A STRONG STATEMENT THAT WE STILL REGARD THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AS EMINENTLY FAIR TO ALL PARTIES INVOLVED AND CONTINUE TO HOPE THAT THEY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A PEACEFUL OUTCOME. I SUGGEST THE TIME HAS COME TO TELL THE FRONT LINE THAT WE WILL SUPPORT IN THE END
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WHATEVER SOLUTION THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE FREELY CHOOSE; THAT WE FEEL THE PATRIOTIC FRONT SHOULD ACCEPT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AS EXPOUNDED AND DISCUSSED IN MALTA WITHOUT FURTHER CONCESSIONS.

IF IT DOES WE WILL WORK TO TRY TO ENSURE THAT IT IS ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ELECTION OR REFERENDUM, BUT AT THIS STAGE WE CAN GIVE NO GUARANTEES.

5. WITH REGARD TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, I SUGGEST WE LET THEM KNOW THAT AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED THE BALL IS IN THEIR COURT; THAT WE ARE READY TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS BUT THE INITIATIVE IS UP TO THEM AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT. IF NKOMO/MUGABE HAVE NEVER HAD ANY INTENTION OF ACCEPTING THE KEY FREE ELECTION PROVISION OF THE PROPOSALS (WHICH IS COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON AN IMPARTIAL POLICE POWER) AS IT IS PROBABLE, THEY WILL CONTINUE TO DENOUNCE PERFEIDIOUS ALBION AND US AS WELL. HOWEVER, IF WE STICK TO OUR DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO CONTRIBUTE TO A LONG-RUN SOLUTION IN OUR INTEREST THAN IF WE SHOULD OFFER FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

STEVENSON

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